

of public policy, avowed or unconscious, even the prejudices which judges share with their fellow men, have had a good deal more to do than the syllogism in determining the rules by which men should be governed. The law embodies the story of a nation's development through many centuries, and it cannot be dealt with as if it contained only the axioms and corollaries of a book of mathematics." As the distinguished writer whom I have quoted tells us, we cannot, without the closest application of the historical method, comprehend the genesis and evolution of the English common law. Its paradox is that in its beginnings the forms of action came before the substance. It is in the history of English remedies that we have to study the growth of rights. I recall a notable sentence in one of Sir Henry Maine's books. "So great," he declares, "is the ascendancy of the law of actions in the infancy of courts of justice, that substantive law has at first the look of being gradually secreted in the interstices of procedure." I will add to his observation this: That all our reforms notwithstanding, the dead hands of the old forms of action still rest firmly upon us. In logic the substantive conceptions ought of course to have preceded these forms. But the historical sequence has been different, for reasons with which every competent student of early English history is familiar. The phenomenon is no uncommon one. The time spirit and the spirit of logical form do not always, in a world where the contingent is ever obtruding itself, travel hand in hand. The germs of substantive law were indeed present as potential forces from the beginning, but they did not grow into life until later on. And therefore forms of action have thrust themselves forward with undue prominence. That is why the understanding of our law is, even for the practitioner of today, inseparable from knowledge of its history.

As with the common law, so it is with equity. To know the principles of equity is to know the history of the courts in which it has been administered, and especially the history of the office which at present I chance myself to hold. Between law and equity there is no other true line of demarcation. The King was the fountain of justice. But to get justice at his hands it